

## NEGRO IN THE WAPS

Hon. John P. Green's Eloquent and Scholarly Memorial Day Address.

**Pictures That Live in History—  
Pictures of Battlefields upon  
which Black Men Fought for  
Freedom and National Integrity  
—Wisdom of the "War Amend-  
ments."**

Memorial Day was fittingly observed yesterday by the colored people of the District of Columbia. The exercises were held at Harmony Cemetery, under the auspices of Frederick Douglass Post G. A. R., of which Major Charles R. Douglass is commander. A vast concourse of citizens was in attendance, and the sacred significance of the occasion was reflected in eloquent oratory, patriotic songs and martial music. The address of the day was delivered by Hon. John P. Green, of Ohio, United States Stamp Agent and former member of the Senate of the Buckeye State. The speech was one of the best ever heard here. It was fervent in sympathy for the soldier dead, full of cheer for the surviving comrades, and abounded in optimism for the future of the race, for whose welfare the white head-stones before him gave out a mute but convincing testimony of love and sacrifice. Mr. Green's utterance was greeted by frequent applause, the recital of the valor of Negro troops evoking especial acclaim. In the pathetic passages dealing with memories of the old days of '61-'65, the stillness was as that of the grave, and strong men were moved to tears. THE COLORED AMERICAN is pleased to present here in full, the admirable address of Mr. Green. He said:

MR. GREEN'S PATRIOTIC ADDRESS.

Mr. Commandant, Brethren of Frederick Douglass Post, G. A. R., and Fellow-Citizens:

The great Frederick Douglass once said: "It will be a sad day for any people, when they no longer have in their midst any great men to whom they can look for guidance and example in the paths which lead to practical success and moral glory." So, I declare to you today, standing in the presence of our hallowed dead who have gone before us: It will be a sad day for any people when they no longer hallow the memory of those to whose deeds of glory they can look for inspiration and emulation in every sphere of manly and patriotic activity.

Nor is this sentiment expressed by me in any sense an original idea; for, as far as any sense an original idea; for, as far back as history, and even traditionary lore can carry us, we find that, in practice this truth was constantly kept before the masses of the people. In Egypt, even before those sublime pyramids were raised to kiss the clouds, royalty and the great heroes of thought and effort were not only chemically embalmed, but, in story and in song, their noble deeds were blazoned forth to the world and handed down—in papyrus and hieroglyphic inscriptions. Nay, more: on their great fete and holy days the remains were brought forth and stood in suitable places, where, while their noble deeds were being rehearsed, they themselves were the cynosures of all eyes.

In China the emulation of the worthy deeds of ancestors, by the precept and example of Confucius, has existed for many centuries.

In Greece the matchless muse of a Homer immortalized the deeds of those who razed the Trojan capital of Priam to the ground and sent the dauntless Aeneas in quest of an asylum for the homeless penates and their worshippers; while the chisel of a Phidias sculptured in living marble the classic features of her matchless sons, still to be seen, treasured up in the Vatican of modern Rome and the art centers of the civilized world.

Similarly, in ancient Rome, incense was burnt upon the altars erected to her

august functionaries—in some instances even while they still strutted and fretted upon this mortal stage of action; while in our own beloved land the names of the Pilgrim Fathers and the Revolutionary Sires are ever hallowed and revered.

In the presence of such well-known historical facts little need is there of an apology on our part that we are here today to recall the times which produced these giants, to laud their patriotism and martial valor, and to search in the conditions of the present auspicious omen for the future.

The stage upon which our heroes acted their part was as large as our whole land—the drama in which they were conspicuously engaged was the saving of a nation and the freeing of a people; they were inspired by the love of liberty and patriotic ardor, while they played attentive audience composed of the whole civilized world.

The times which molded and fashioned these heroic men were, in some respects, unique: never before had such existed in this country, and let us pray God that they may never again afflict us.

From the inception of our Government down to the beginning of the great Rebellion for the destruction of the Union the moral forces of our land had been arrayed against that pestiferous evil, human slavery not inaptly termed by one, "the sum of all villainies"; by another, likened to the great Upas tree, the touch of which is fatal to living forms; and also to that strange plant of the Antipodes, facetiously called the "lawyer vine," which, entwining some proud tree of the forest in its close embrace, finally smothers it in its relentless folds, and then, proudly victorious, stands in its stead.

Those were the times when men of nerve, intellect and moral courage were in demand; and when, in titanic struggle, quarter was neither asked nor granted.

Their impact raised a sound which "Tore Hell's concave, and beyond  
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night."

First and foremost among those who buckled on his armor, in the beginning of the last century, was that earnest Quaker lad, Benjamin Lundy, with his "Genius of Universal Emancipation" newspaper, and his Union Humane Society, organized at Mount Pleasant, Ohio.

During the third decade of the same century, we find Elijah P. Lovejoy toiling, contending and dying, in the cause of human liberty, in the State of Illinois.

Then along stalks old William Lloyd Garrison—speaking, publishing newspapers and generally contending for "Emancipation as the right of the slave and the duty of the master; disclaiming all temporizing, all make-shifts, all compromises; condemning colonization and everything else that involved or implied affiliation or sympathy with slaveholders." His motto was, "Our Country Is the World; Our Countrymen Are all Mankind."

Sometimes languishing, like the Apostles of Christ, in prison, and again being hauled through the streets with a rope around his neck, he "fought the good fight" and lived to see the consummation of his dearest hope.

A tall and stately man of sombre hue shies his castor into the arena, and, fresh from the bosom of the hated antagonist, his knowledge and his recent sufferings inspire in him a mortal hatred, and arm him for the fray. Do you ask his name? It is that stalwart veteran who, never wearying of the strife, even after the Proclamation had been issued, girded himself for that new and well-nigh interminable struggle for equal rights in the spirit of the law. It is he who, at the close of a long, eventful and useful life, received the conqueror's crown. It is that earnest, stately, faithful patriot-philosopher—Frederick Douglass!

Towering above the rabble who despise and deride him, another form, conspicuous for its gearing and commanding in his speech, confronts us—one to whom high birth, riches and the learning of all the schools are as nothing unless they can be made to serve the cause of humanity. In the arena of oratory and forensic art, where the silver tongue, honed accents and stern logic sway the masses, he rules without a peer; and in earnest metaphor well may he exclaim:

"Before my body  
I throw my warlike shield; lay on Mac-duff,

And damn'd be he that first cries 'Hold, enough!'"

Wendell Phillips, if you please, whose memory is in perennial bloom, and ever shall be as long as knowledge, liberty and truth remain immortal.

Then, in the midst of a countless throng, conspicuous by that martyr's crown which adorns his brow, "Old John Brown" came marching on. He the stalwart preacher of Liberty, Justice and Right—a man who died for his cause—comes marching on! In the forefront of the fray, giving and receiving blows in behalf of his cause, he is stricken down; and afterward, like his Saviour whom he loved, he was hung to a tree; but,

"His soul goes marching on."  
But who can call this roll of honor, or more than casually glance at the wonderful list of heroes, each of whom has gone, or in God's good time will go to wear a victor's crown?

Suffice it to say that, in the face of obloquy and scorn, social ostracism, legal persecution and physical violence, they succeeded in arousing the attention of the fair-minded people of this and other countries to the great iniquity, and in promoting a sentiment which may be likened to Byron's description of a popular tumult:

"At first it grumbles, then it swears, and then,  
Like David, flings smooth pebbles 'gainst a giant;  
At last it takes to weapons, such as men  
Snatch when despair makes human  
hearts less pliant;  
Then comes the tug of war!"

The foundations of the accursed institution were shaken and it toppled from its proud pedestal, to rise no more.

Does the foregoing inspire the thought that, like another Jericho, these ramparts fell at the winding of a ram's horn? Perish the thought, in the presence of these hallowed graves, and these our living veterans who bear the visible tokens of strife and suffering in the holy cause!

It was no innovation in the martial experiences of the people of this country to enlist colored soldiers to fight for its cause, beneath the Stars and Stripes; for, not only during the Revolutionary War but also at New Orleans during the War of 1812, colored men had sealed with their blood their patriotism, love and devotion for this their native land. However, since those days, the country had prospered so greatly, and the slave power had gained such an ascendancy, not only in the law-making body of the nation, but even in the hearts and minds of the average politician, that, when colored men sought to enlist they met not only with a refusal, but, in one instance, a stern rebuff. "This is a white man's war," said the late Governor David Tod, of Ohio, to a committee of colored men who sought his friendly offices toward the enlistment of colored troops during the early stages of the war, "and white men are going to fight its battles!" With clearer vision, however, did that matchless "Pathfinder," General John C. Fremont, commanding the Army of the West, in August, 1861; and that other grizzled patriot, General David Hunter, commanding the Army of the South, in May, 1862, see the signs of the times; and had their orders been left to have full sway who can say that the bloody and wasteful War of the Rebellion would not have successfully terminated years before it did?

It is not within the scope of this address, however, or befitting this occasion, to relate in detail all the struggles and disappointments which were experienced before the ranks of the Union Army opened for the receptions of their "brothers in black."

Let it suffice to say that, with the great Proclamation of Emancipation, opposition ceased; and from that time down to the present day colored men have continued to wear and honor that blue which is known and respected wherever civilization has made its impress.

The total number of Negro soldiers furnished by the States and Territories during the Rebellion, as stated by the late George W. Williams, in his "Negro Troops in the Rebellion," was 178,975; of course, this has no reference to many thousands of colored men who served in the army as teamsters, laborers and servants in many other capacities.

Nor must we forget that, at the time when many of these troops were en-

listed, they were offered as compensation for their services the meager sum of \$11 per month; while the white soldiers were receiving \$13 for the same services.

In addition to the foregoing, it is worthy of mention that these troops were enlisted in the face of the fact that the Confederate Government had proclaimed (Proclamation of Jefferson Davis, Dec. 23, 1862) that no quarter would be given to Negroes captured with arms in their hands.

The Fort Pillow Massacre will go down in history as one of the most cruel and heartless butcheries on record; when with the "rebel yell" of "No quarter!" Major N. B. Forrest, at the head of a division of rebel cavalry, attacked and unmercifully butchered five hundred and fifty-seven colored troops, under the command of Major L. F. Booth, of the Union Army, after they had surrendered.

The historian tells us: "As rapidly as the men surrendered they were murdered; and the Negroes, believing that no mercy would be shown them, rushed at top speed down the bluffs to the river. The enemy pursued, and shot them down as soon as overtaken. Many of the wounded, to escape brutal treatment, feigned death; but they were revived by cruel kicks and blows, compelled to rise to their knees and then shot."

It was not long, however, before the enemy were given to understand, by a threatened reciprocal policy on the part of the Government of the United States, and by the bravery of the colored troops in action, that the rules of modern warfare could not thus be set at defiance without incurring a terrible retaliation on the part of those who were guilty of the deeds; and the practice was discontinued.

At the Battle of Fort Wagner, the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts regiment of infantry, led by that chivalric and indomitable scion of one of Massachusetts' most refined and cultured white families, made a charge on the fort, and to some extent even within the fort, which would have honored the Greeks at Marathon or the English at Balaklava.

In the language of the same historian: "The column advanced quickly to the perilous work. The ramparts of Wagner flashed with small arms, and all the large shotted guns roared with defiance."

"Sumter and Cummings Point delivered a destructive cross-fire, while the howitzers in the bastions raked the ditch; but the gallant Negro regiment swept across it and gained the parapet. Here the flag of this regiment was planted; here General Strong fell mortally wounded, and here the brave, the beautiful and heroic Colonel Shaw was saluted by death and kissed by immortality. \* \* \* The contest endured for about an hour, when the regiment, shattered and torn, with nearly all of its officers dead or wounded, was withdrawn, under the command of Captain Luis F. Emilio."

Another battle which opened the eyes of the civilized world to the fact that the Negro troops were foemen worthy the steel of the most gallant troops on earth, was that of Olustee, in the everglades of Florida, fought on the 20th of February, 1864, between the Eighth United States Colored Troops, the First North Carolina and the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Colored Volunteers. We are told that "Although the battle of Olustee was not a victory, yet it furnished an opportunity for martial valor of the highest order, and the opportunity was fully appreciated and embraced by all the troops; but by none more than the gallant Negro regiments."

At the battle of Fort Fisher, near Wilmington, N. C., the colored troops fought with a desperation begotten of an intelligent appreciation of the cause which they were serving; and, in some instances, were found heaped in piles where they had died, rather than fail.

At New Market Heights, which was a strategic point of great value, the colored troops fought with such valor and desperation that they furnished to the late General Benjamin F. Butler the inspiration for a panegyric on the services and value of the colored troops, when in after years he was championing the cause of the Negro upon the floor of the National House of Representatives. Here is, in brief, what he said:

"I went myself with the colored troops to attack the enemy at New Market Heights, which was the key to the enemy's flank on the north side of James